

## Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Retirement Villages

The issues that we believe need to be urgently addressed:

### **Rates differentiation**

It seems to us to be an injustice that residents of retirement villages should bear an inequitable share of council rates. Our village (like all other villages) in the City of Casey gives us as residents no discount to the standard Rate Allocation even though they (the Council) provide no direct service other than waste collection.

It is the responsibility of the Village Residents to care for all road maintenance, parking and footpath construction; internal street lighting, verge care and drainage etc.

It is financially difficult for some residents in 'Saffron Drive' (mostly single females) to have to pay for all the above whilst the Council reaps the benefit of having no liability or responsibility.

Our Village has 96 units for which the full Rate Allocation is levied, which under normal circumstances of house lots there would be approximately only 45 standard homes constructed with relative roads, lighting, drainage etc; The Council in our case reaping over double the financial rate value.

### **Ombudsman appointment.**

For the average mature aged residents the current dispute resolution procedures are too heavily weighted in favour of the owners of villages; the average resident cannot afford to access professional legal services and in a number of instances intimidated by Village Owners and/or Managers so are afraid to seek outside assistance. While certain villages have viable internal procedures, the lack of an approachable avenue for assistance in this respect means that too many encroachments go unchallenged.

We personally are already making use of currently available Ombudsman services (insurance, energy) but because there is no similar service in relation to Retirement Villages we have no similar course of action.

Yours faithfully

Margaret & Roy Reynolds

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